THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GIRIDHAR GOMANGO): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. During the current financial year 1988-89, Bhuaneshwar Telephone Exchange Unit-I has been expanded from 7000 to 8000 lines. A new 4000 lines electronic E-10B exchange is proposed at Bhubaneshwar during 1989-91. Cuttack telephone exchange Unit II is proposed to be expanded from 1000 to 3000 lines during 1988-89.

(c) and (d) The exchanges at other places of Orissa are proposed to be expanded as per the Seventh Plan objectives of the Department in this regard. During 1988-89, the NEAX exchanges at Dhenkanal, and Baripada have already been expanded from 600 to 700 lines & 600 to 1000 lines respectively. The manual exchanges at Koraput & Phulbani have been converted and expanded from 240 to 400 lines and 300 to 400 lines Electronic exchanges (NEAX) respectively during 1988-89. The exchanges at Sambalpur, Berhampur, Rourkela Plant, Rourkela township, Balasore, Paradeep, Bargarh, Jharsuguda, Bhadrak; Puri, Bolangir, Angul, Bhawanipatna and Mancheswar are also proposed to be expanded. Manual and MAX-III exchanges some other places are proposed to be replaced and expanded and new exchanges are proposed at some other places subject to the availability of minimum demand. This work is in various stages of implementaton and is likely to be completed by the end of Seventh Plan. A sum of Rs. 5.48 crore is proposed for local telephone system in the budget allocation for Orissa for the year 1988-89.

Funding pattern of Ib valley Thermal Power Plant

1274. SHRI BASUDEB MOHAPATRA: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have not taken a decision regarding funding pattern of Ib Valley Thermal Power Plant in the State of Orissa;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) what would be the total cost of the project and the quantity of electriciy to be generated after completion of the project; and

(d) on which dates the Planning Commission and Government had given their sanction to the said project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF POWER IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRI KALPNATH RAI): (a) to (d) In April, 1987, the Planning Commission approved the Ib Valley Thermal Power Project (4x210 MW) at an estimated cost of Rs. 887.99 crores in the State Sector. The funding pattern is to be determined by the State authorities.

The Orissa Power Generation Corporation (OPGC) have placed a letter of intent on M|s. BHEL with the stipulation that the financing and prices would be settled through negotiations. Negotiations between M|s. OPGC and M|s. BHEL are in progress for the installation of two units, with provision of infrastructure for four units.

ED employees

1275. SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state;

(a) whether it is a fact that school teachers and retired Government employees are also working as ED employees; and

(b) if so, what is their number as on 31.10.88?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GIRIDHAR GOMANGO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The total number of ED employees includes teachers etc. but details are not maintained separately. The total number of ED employees as on 31.10.88 is of the order of 2,98,000.

Wages of ED branch post masters

1276. SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the basis of fixing the minimum and maximum emoluments of ED employees;

(b) whether ED Branch Post Masters work for 3 hours daily and get Rs. 275 per month; if so, what is their number; and

(c) to what extent the ED-BPMs have been benefited by the recommendations of the ED committee and what has been the minimum and maximum gain to each ED BPM since 1st January, 1986?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GIRIDHAR GOMANGO): (a) The allowances of extra departmental employees are fixed between a minimum and maximum basic allowance depending on workload.

(b) ED Branch Post Masters are required to keep open branch post offices for a period of not less than 3 hours on all days on which the post office is kept open. They are paid a basic allowance ranging from Rs. 275 to Rs. 440 per month based on workload. In addition, they are paid Dearness Allowance, office Maintenance Allowance, Fixed Stationery Allowance and Delivery Allowance whereever applicable. The number of branch post masters is 1,16,622 as on 31.3.1988.

(c) The details of allowance drawn by the ED Branch Postmasters before 1.1.1986 and after 1.1.1986 are given below:

Nature of Allowance	Drawn before 1-1-1986 (Rs.)		Drawn after 1-1-1986 (Rs.)		Increase (Rs.)	
	MIN	MAX	MIN	MAX	MIN	MAX
Basic Allowance	217	265	275	440	58	175
Office Main. Allowance	10			25		15
Fixed Stationery Allowance	1		3			2
Delivery Allowance wherever applicable	15		50			35

Apart from the above allowances, the ED employees (including EDBPMs) are also entitled to Dearness Allowance at the same rate and frequency at which it is granted to departmental employees. Prior to 1.1.1986, the allowances were revised on 1st September, every year on the basis of incrase on Consumer Price Index. After 1.1.1986, they have been brought on par with the departmental employees in the matter of grant of Dearness Allowance.

Electronic telephone exchanges in Haryana

1277. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have since approved the setting up of electronic